

Attack was the keynote at Sandy Lane

TOOTING & MITCHAM 2, WYCOMBE WANDERERS 5
(Isthmian League)

FORGET this misleading score-line. This exciting encounter at Sandy Lane on Saturday was brimful of the sort of attacking soccer that will bring the lost hordes back to the rusting turnstiles. Thrills spilled out like a rapid machine gun and if these teams had shared a dozen goals, justice would have been done.

Both sides netted from penalties while goalkeeper Guy stopped another Wycombe spot kick in dazzling fashion. Both teams shattered the woodwork in a sizzling opening spell and from the word go defence was disintegrated as two goal-hungry attacks set out to shatter

By FRED PHILPOT

the present day defensive football image.

Play switched from end to end with bewildering frequency. And the speed of all 22 players was a tribute to their training schedules.

United missed several early opportunities and in the end they lost because the visitors grasped theirs. Perhaps the Buckinghamshire squad moved better off the ball and marked just that fraction tighter.

But this was a knife-edge battle that could have gone either way until a late injury to John Robertson—the only note of discord on an afternoon that renewed our faith in amateur soccer.

Despite the penalties this was far from being a dirty game. Hard and

fast, it was more of an advert to show all the "knockers."

In the initial Tooting attack Colin Johnson went sprawling in the area. But referee Press ignored United's appeals and showed his impartiality almost immediately when he disallowed a Horseman goal for off-side.

Former United star Paul Bates then thundered a 30-yard drive against the bar while Maskell clawed a Jelly header out of the air after Johnson had dispossessed Maskell.

Greatorex and Flood were buzzing everywhere in mid-field and they combined for the inside-right to crash home a great shot that sped past Maskell's arms only to hit the junction of the post and crossbar.

Next Guy saved Bates' penalty kick after "hands" by Holder—and still the game was barely 15 minutes old.

Disaster struck for Tooting after 19 minutes when John Robertson deflected a shot from Samuels and the ball skidded between Guy's legs into the net as the young goalkeeper fell backwards.

United stormed back after this and Maskell did well to reach a swinging shot from Goldrick.

GOAL BLITZ

However, the equaliser came three minutes from the break when Flood glided round Rundle and scored off the far post.

But the crowd had hardly finished cheering before Gale sent in a speculative shot that curled into goal to give the visitors a 2-1 interval lead.

Johnson should have restored the balance on the resumption but he shot straight at Maskell with the goal gaping wide.

Hardly once did the tempo slacken and Wycombe increased their lead in the 53rd minute when Merrick volleyed in his first goal of the season.

It was Tooting's turn next and Ken Holder blasted home a 71st minute penalty after Rundle had bundled Johnson off the ball.

The game was still wide open as Wycombe, well marshalled by Bates, opened it up with long, raking passes, while Tooting relied on the quick counter-attack.

The crunch came eight minutes from time when Horseman evaded a Robertson tackle and netted from an oblique angle. It was his 21st goal of the season and enough to give Wycombe a 4-2 lead.

Alas for United England ace Robertson had aggravated an old injury in his left leg in the process and was helped off, Jeffreys coming on as substitute.

And with only a minute left, Hemphrey and Merrick clashed in the area and Bates slotted home the resultant penalty to give the final score a lop-sided effect.

Tooting: Guy; Holder, Fillery; Greatorex, Robertson, Hemphrey; Jelly, Flood, Johnson, Goldrick, Green.

Robertson injured—

5-2

Guy saves a penalty

Tooting 2, Wycombe Wanderers 5 by PETER BROMIL

TOOTING centre-half John Robertson left the field eight minutes from the end of this entertaining Isthmian League clash at Sandy Lane on Saturday as Wycombe netted their fourth goal. He missed England's trial mat at Loakes Park last night.

Robertson went down after a tackle with Wycombe inside left Tony Horseman and was helped off the pitch with an injury to his left thigh. Noel Jeffreys came on as substitute.

Horseman went on to put Wycombe into a 4-2 lead as he beat Richard Guy from the narrowest of angles.

Both teams scored from penalties and the visitors also missed from the spot when Guy threw himself sideways to foil veteran international Paul Bates after only 15 minutes.

Guy's penalty save followed only for a Samuels shot to bounce off Robertson's head and speed through the young goalkeeper's legs to put the visitors in front after 20 minutes.

Three minutes from the interval Tooting were back on terms as Flood darted through to score off a post.

Within seconds Wycombe were back in front when Gale beat Guy with a deceptive long shot.

Play continued to be fast and furious after half-time and Merrick had plenty of time to shoot Wycombe into a 3-1 lead eight minutes after the change-round.

The visitors continued to worry Tooting, but they weathered a stormy period and roared back once again with a Ken Holder penalty after Colin Johnson had been pushed off the ball.

However, Horseman made it 4-2 as Robertson was injured, and a minute from the end Bates finally settled the issue from a penalty.

Tooting: Guy; Holder, Fillery; Greatorex, Robertson (Jeffreys), Hemphrey; Jelly, Flood, Johnson, Goldrick, Green.

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